

## CLAIMS

We claim:

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1. A method for effecting a superficial chemical skin peel which comprises topically applying to skin to be treated a solution of salicylic acid containing at least 15 wt% salicylic acid, based on the weight of the solution, in a dermatologically acceptable liquid solvent.
  2. The method of claim 1 wherein the salicylic acid is present in the solution in an amount of at least about 20 wt%.
  3. The method of claim 1 wherein the salicylic acid is present in the solution in an amount of at least about 30 wt%.
  4. The method of claim 1 wherein the solvent is selected from the group consisting of ethanol, isopropanol, methanol, acetone, diethyl ether and propylene glycol.
  5. The method of claim 1 wherein the solution comprises salicylic acid in ethanol.
  6. The method of claim 1 which further comprises the step of allowing the applied solution to dry on the skin.
  7. The method of claim 6 which further comprises the step of wiping the treated skin after the applied solution has dried, to remove residue from the applied solution from the skin.
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8. The method of claim 7 wherein the treated skin is wiped with water.

9. The method of claim 1 which further comprises the step of wiping the treated skin no later than one hour after the solution has been applied, to remove residual applied solution.

10. The method of claim 8 wherein the treated skin is wiped with water.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein the treated skin is facial skin.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein the skin being treated is affected with a skin disorder selected from the group consisting of photodamaged skin, hyperpigmentation, acne vulgaris, rosacea, pre-malignant skin cancer, wrinkles and superficial scarring.

a 13. The method of claim 12 wherein the skin disorder is hyperpigmentation ~~that is melasma~~.

14. The method of claim 12 wherein the skin disorder is acne vulgaris, selected from inflammatory acne, comedonal acne and acne-induced scarring.  
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15. A composition useful for superficial chemical skin peels that consists essentially of a solution of salicylic acid dissolved in a dermatologically acceptable liquid solvent, the amount of salicylic acid being at least 15 wt%, based on the weight of the solution, said solution also containing at least one dermatologically

acceptable adjuvant in an amount of from about 0.01 to about 5 wt%, based on the weight of the solution.

16. The composition of claim 15 wherein the salicylic acid is present in the solution in an amount of at least about 20 wt%.

17. The composition of claim 15 wherein the salicylic acid is present in the solution in an amount of at least about 30 wt%.

18. The composition of claim 15 wherein the solvent is selected from the group consisting of ethanol, isopropanol, methanol, acetone, diethyl ether and propylene glycol.

19. The composition of claim 15 wherein the dermatologically acceptable adjuvant is selected from the group consisting of a preservative, stabilizer, antioxidant, thickening agent, surfactant, pigment, colorant and fragrance.

20. A composition useful for superficial chemical skin peels that consists essentially of salicylic acid dissolved in aqueous ethanol, in an amount of at least 15 wt% based on the weight of the solution, said aqueous ethanol containing about 85 to 99 wt% ethanol.

21. The composition of claim 20 wherein the salicylic acid is present in the solution in an amount of at least about 20 wt%.

22. The composition of claim 20 wherein the aqueous ethanol contains about 90 to 95 wt% ethanol.